

Amendments to the Claims

Kindly amend claims 1 and 7 and ADD claim 8 as indicated in the listing below. This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Currently amended): A process for producing R-2-(4-hydroxyphenoxy)propanoic acid or a salt thereof by reaction of hydroquinone or a salt thereof with a S-2-halopropanoic acid or a salt thereof in the presence of a mild reducing agent ~~wherein the mild reducing agent is a neutral or a charged low oxidation state sulphur species, such as sulphur dioxide, a sulphite, a bisulphite, a hydrosulphite, a metabisulphite, a sulphenic acid, a sulphinic acid, for example formamidino sulphinic acid, or a low oxidation state phosphorous species such as a phosphite or hypophosphite, or hydrazine, a hydrazine derivative, or ascorbic acid.~~
2. (Original): A process according to claim 1 wherein the S-2-halopropanoic acid is S-2-chloropropanoic acid.
3. (Previously presented): A process according to claim 1 wherein the excess hydroquinone is recovered for recycle.
4. (Previously presented): A process according to claim 1 wherein the mild reducing agent is a neutral or a charged low oxidation state sulphur species, a low oxidation state phosphorous species, hydrazine, a hydrazine derivative or ascorbic acid.
5. (Original): A process according to claim 4 wherein the mild reducing agent is sulphur dioxide, a sulphite, a bisulphite, a hydrosulphite, a metabisulphite, a sulphenic acid, a sulphinic acid, a phosphite, hypophosphite, hydrazine, a hydrazine derivative or ascorbic acid.

6. (Original): A process according to claim 5 wherein the mild reducing agent is an alkali metal sulphite or bisulphite.
7. (Currently amended): A process for the manufacture of quizalofop-P-ethyl, haloxyfop-P-methyl, fluazifop-P-butyl, clodinafop, cyhalofop-butyl or fenoxaprop-P-ethyl by:
 - a) producing R-2-(4-hydroxyphenoxy)propanoic acid by reaction of hydroquinone or a salt thereof with S-2-halopropanoic acid or a salt thereof, in the presence of a mild reducing agent,
 - b) reacting the R-2-(4-hydroxyphenoxy)propanoic acid with the appropriate halo-aryl or halo-heteroaryl moiety to give a R-2-((4-aryloxy or heteroaryloxy)phenoxy)propanoic acid; and
 - c) esterification of the acid from step b) to give quizalofop-P-ethyl, haloxyfop-P-methyl, fluazifop-P-butyl, clodinafop, cyhalofop-butyl or fenoxaprop-P-ethyl.
8. (New) A process according to claim 5 wherein the sulphinic acid is formamidine sulphinic acid.